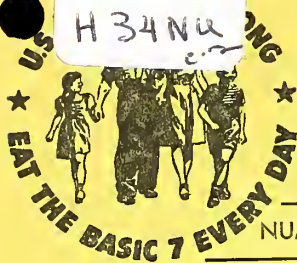


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National Conference On Aging

At the opening of the National Conference on Aging last August the Honorable Oscar R. Ewing, Administrator of the Federal Security Agency, read a message from President Truman which said, "we need imaginative thinking about the special problems of health, housing, and recreation that older people face."

During the Conference it was pointed out that, although there is an urgent need for new knowledge about problems facing the aging, we already have know-how to solve many of the health and medical problems and much could be accomplished if we applied what we do know.

Discussion showed that nutrition, directly or indirectly, is related to many other factors. For example, the kind and amount of food a person eats is influenced not only by his financial resources but also by his physical condition, whether he lives alone in a room or with relatives in a home, and a number of other conditions.

The 800 authorities from all fields dealing with the aging problem who attended the Conference pooled their ideas, information, and conclusions to show what we know and what we don't know about aging. They explored ways of making it possible for older people to use their capacities for productive work, creative living, and leadership.

Planning for the aging should be part of the total community planning, it was pointed out. All existing agencies concerned with the problem should be utilized and participation of many people encouraged, especially of older people who naturally want to take part. Facilities and services provided for the health of older people should not be set up separately from those services for the population as a whole; rather all services should be broadened and strengthened to serve the entire population.

Golden Age Clubs Hear About Nutrition

Grandmothers and grandfathers of Cleveland (Ohio) from 60 to 90 years old hear nutrition talks and see food demonstrations at Golden Age Club meetings. Elizabeth Whipple, Director of the Nutrition Association of Greater Cleveland, writes that there are 27 Golden Age Clubs in Cleveland, meeting one afternoon a week in churches, settlement houses, and other community meeting places. The largest club has 450 members, the smallest has 12. The clubs are sponsored by many public and private institutions and agencies, with the Cleveland Welfare Federation as consultant and coordinator.

To the Nutrition Association of Cleveland these organizations seemed a made-to-order way of reaching older people, but the Golden Age Clubs are primarily for fun and companionship, and not primarily for learning. Interests of the members themselves determine what each club plans for its meetings. If a talk on nutrition is requested by a club the material has to be geared to interests, needs, and ideas rather different from those of the average audience. Older people, particularly, are sometimes not readily convinced that science knows more about what one should eat than the individual himself does.

Each program has to have something in it for wide variety of backgrounds and situations. Members come from many income brackets and many nationalities and with varying amounts of education. Some are spry and some are not so spry. Some live alone and some live with sons and daughters.

If they live alone in a rooming house or in a small apartment, their physical condition may determine the extent and frequency of their marketing. If they live with sons and daughters, nutrition education may, at best, influence them to eat more of what is available.

Nutrition talks for the Golden Age Clubs have gone through trial and error

process. Now the Nutrition Association feels that it has arrived at a formula that provides entertainment as well as information. This is the formula that seems to work:

..Lard the material with as many funny stories as possible. Older people sometimes don't have too many chances to laugh, and they like to.

..Relate the changes in knowledge about food to other changes that older people have accepted, such as those in medicine, transportation, and longevity.

..Concentrate on the potential benefits of good nutrition most likely to interest older people.

..Emphasize low-cost foods in the various food groups, since many older people are living on small incomes.

..Make as many suggestions as possible for streamlined buying, storing, meal planning, and preparation with very limited equipment. These everyday duties are often real problems.

Speakers keep in mind that some older people may not hear well. A good strong voice is a decided asset. Sometimes it is a good idea to make a point in several ways in case someone "didn't quite catch it." Talking a little slower than usual seems to work well too.

Visual material is especially important. Extra-large print helps old eyes to see it better. Sometimes it seems wise to show and discuss visual material a little longer than one usually does.

Simple refreshments are always part of club meetings. For nutrition programs, the refreshments have usually been oatmeal cookies and cocoa made with nonfat dry milk. When nonfat dry milk is used, a demonstration on how to prepare it is included as a part of the talk preceding the refreshments. Members who are a little skeptical during the demonstration are usually won over completely by the refreshments.

The Nutrition Association has no accurate way of evaluating the educational effectiveness of the program. The liveliness of the discussions, the number of questions asked, and a few reports of improved eating are indications that this kind of program is worthwhile.

Food Problems of Older Adults Studied

In studying the problem of nutrition for older adults, the New Jersey Nutri-

tion Council assembled information on meals served in institutions within the State and on what was being done on this problem by State Departments of Health in other States. It also compiled a list of publications dealing with feeding of older persons. In consultation with the State Medical Society recommendations for improving the nutritional status of older adults were drawn up and the Council is encouraging State institutions to serve approved meals.

Teaching materials for schools and for adult groups have been prepared and interest in the subject has been aroused through newspaper and radio publicity. This project is described in a series of articles in the New Jersey Educational Review, beginning with the November issue, writes Dr. Charles F. Church, Chairman of the Council.

Puerto Rico Plants Vitamin-Rich Foods Along Its Highways.

Puerto Rico is taking positive action toward improving the nutrition of its people. Recently at a meeting in honor of special visitors the Puerto Rico Nutrition Committee reviewed its own and the nutrition activities of the agencies which it coordinates, Chairman Rosa Marina Torres writes.

One of the agency representatives reporting was the Commissioner of Agriculture, who said that his Department, at the suggestion of the Puerto Rico Nutrition Committee, is fostering the planting of more "yellows and greens" in the Island. The Department is also cooperating with the Department of Interior in planting along the roads of Puerto Rico such trees as will not only beautify the roads but will also provide good food for the passer-by. The breadfruit tree, mango, guava, and West Indian cherry (*Malpighia punicifolia*) are especially valuable for these purposes--the cherry being one of the richest, if not the richest, food sources of vitamin C known. Two or three cherries furnish the daily requirement of vitamin C. (Ascorbic Acid Content and Other Characteristics of the West Indian Cherry, by C. F. Asenjo and C. G. Moscoso. Food Research vol. 15, pp. 103-106, 1950.) During the summer a series of short courses for camineros, or roadkeepers, featured the planting of such food trees and also of calabaza (squash) along the road.

Representatives of all agencies said that they had been stimulated by meeting

together in the Committee and found added incentive in planning for special projects. The Committee centered its attention this year on the nonfat dry milk campaign (May NNL). Through the fine cooperation of member agencies, more than 40,000 persons have seen a dry skim milk demonstration. This means that an even larger number has been reached indirectly.

The next project scheduled is a campaign to increase home production and more widespread use of calabaza. Now used in very small amounts in every home in Puerto Rico, this vegetable is a very good source of pro-vitamin A and an ideal supplement to nonfat dry milk.

A color film strip with text, as well as other materials, has been prepared for use of some 500 key people--home economists, nutritionists, health educators, and lay leaders--in teaching the merits of calabaza.

Governor Muñoz-Marín and his wife are supporting the Committee's activities by urging people to plant and eat calabaza, to plant breadfruit and other fruit trees along the roads, and in general to raise more of their own food.

Although the Committee is interested in all nutrition problems, it has found that the most effective way to produce results is to center major efforts on one all-out program at a time.

Recommendations Made By Health Officers

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officers in their October meeting in Washington recommended that the existing Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act be amended to prevent the incorporation into or on foods of chemical or other new ingredients before they had been reviewed and approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

The Association also urged that health agencies, in considering the place of enrichment and fortification of foods in improving the nutritional status of the population, should consider the recommendations made by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council on the addition of specific nutrients to staple foods.

Other recommendations relating to food and nutrition were that--

..State Health agencies take appropriate measures for encouraging improvement of

the diet of the general population and of individuals receiving care in State institutions.

..State health departments continue their activities in nutrition programs in relation to human health and disease.

..The Public Health Service seek approval for the continuation of their services in the field of nutrition consultation and assistance to State health departments, and the Children's Bureau continue its activities in this same field.

Participating in the 5-day conference were 175 public health officials from all States and Territories and eight Canadian Provinces, the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service, and the Chief of the Children's Bureau.

A representative of the National Security Resources Board reported that the civil defense manual, which will be issued soon, will "contain detailed suggestions for organization, facilities, equipment, and supplies."

A full report of the resolutions and recommendations will be published in the Conference proceedings, and will be available from the U. S. Public Health Service, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

Plenty of Food For Defense

Emphasizing that the maximum contribution agriculture can make to the Nation's mobilization is abundant production, Secretary of Agriculture Brannan told the annual Outlook Conference on October 30 that "Agriculture's present challenge is a call for abundant production, both for the physical and economic needs of the Nation.

"That means enough of the right kinds of food and other farm products to fill every need at reasonable prices...

"We're in good shape," he said. "Even allowing for increases in military food requirements, we expect to have ample food in the year ahead so that civilians can actually eat better than during the past two years. We expect per capita food consumption to increase--possibly by 2 to 3 percent."

"Our superb food production rules out any need at this time for drastic food controls. The family market basket can still be filled at prices lower than the

lowest ceilings that could be put on under the Defense Production Act.

"Whether or not we can keep it that way through the next 12 months will determine the extent to which we must be faced with controls to prevent food price inflation.

"We're gearing the Department of Agriculture's policies to that goal of abundant production...

"We have established an Office of Requirements and Allocations to be responsible for integrating the demand for farm products--to find out how much food we need, how much we've got, and to

balance off requirements of civilian, military, ECA, and other outlets in view of available supplies.

"We have taken advantage of the already existing framework of the PMA in setting up the machinery for these essential new purposes. But let me make it clear that not only the full facilities of all branches of PMA but also all other Bureaus of the Department will be utilized to achieve our preparedness objectives--the new offices acting as clearing houses or coordinating bodies rather than replacing any existing agencies."

New Materials

Available from Information Branch Production and Marketing Administration, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

School Lunch Recipes--Cooking with Dried Whole Eggs. PA-136, 21 pp. 1950. (Revision of PA-58.)

Available from Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

Food Consumption Trends in Birmingham, Alabama, 1935, 1946, and 1948. Special Report 1, 1948 Food Consumption Surveys. 19 pp. 1950. (Processed.)

Nutritive Content of City Diets. Special Report 2. 22 pp. 1950. (A summary report including some unpublished data from 1948-49 Food Consumption Surveys.) (Processed.)

Rural Family Living Charts. 92 pp. Prepared for 1951 Outlook Conference, October 1950.

A filmstrip made up of 50 charts

selected from this series is available for \$1.25 from the Photo-Lab, Inc., 3825 Georgia Ave., N. W., Washington 11, D. C. Check or money order for the filmstrip (No. 688) should be made out to Photo-Lab, Inc.

Available from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

The National Food Situation. No. 54. Oct.-Dec. 1950. 39 pp. (Processed.) Available from the Mailing Room, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Mass.

Heat Penetration and Processing Studies on Home-Canned Corn, Hominy, Pork and Beans, and Potatoes. Bul. 456, 23 pp., illus. 1950. (Report of a project carried on jointly by the Mass. Agr. Expt. Sta. and the USDA Bur. Human Nutrition and Home Economics as part of a program for developing safe processing times for home canners.)